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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: KSCA TBIO OSCI OTRA
SUBJECT: EMBASSY DHAKA GRANTS COUNTRY CLEARANCE FOR
ASSISTANT SECRETARY STEWART SIMONSON

REF: SECSTATE 56922

Embassy Dhaka welcomes and grants country clearance for
Assistant Secretary Stewart Simonson's April 22-25, 2006
visit. Control officer is Dr. Steve Luby from CDC (office)
88 02 988 1761, (mobile) 01711-593-416, (home)
880-2-885-5583, (fax) 88 02 882 3963. Assistant Secretary
Simonson has a TS Security Clearance.

¶2.   Hotel arrangements have been made/confirmed at Hotel
Lake Castle, House 1/A, Road 63-A, Gulshan 2; TEL: 881-2812.
 The Mission,s workweek is Sunday-Thursday from 0800 to 1630
hours. There will not be a local/American holiday during the
visit period.

¶3.   Embassy expediter and Control Officer will meet and
assist on arrival. Please advise if there is any change in
flight information. Notional schedule/any additional requests
should be communicated to post via e-mail.

¶4.   Please note the following:

A)   IMPORTANT. Personnel entering Bangladesh are required
to possess a valid passport, with a minimum validity of six
months. A valid visa is also required prior to arrival.

B)   Departure: All personnel (including holders of
diplomatic and official passports) are urged to use the
services of the U.S. Mission,s travel agent for reconfirming
onward travel and to verify if the departure tax of 300 taka
300 (approximately USD 5) and the travel tax (approximately
2500 taka) have been included in the cost of the ticket. If
not included, travelers must pay in taka at the airport.

C)   Currency: The local use of U.S. dollars is prohibited
by law, except for the payment of a hotel bill.
Accommodation exchange for incidental local expenses is
available at the Chancery. Reverse accommodation exchange is
available only at the original place of exchange with
original documents and receipts as proof. Automatic Teller
Machines (ATMs) are very limited, not readily accessible, and
dispense taka only. Traveler checks cannot be used in most
establishments except international hotels. Most major
credit cards are accepted at international hotels.

D)   American Recreation Association (Embassy club)
facilities are available to U.S. citizen official visitors
for a temporary membership fee of USD 10.00 per week. In
addition to the membership fee, you will be required to
purchase a cash card. A copy of your passport data page or a
passport-sized photograph is necessary to obtain a cash card.
 This card will enable you to have meals and use club
facilities (which include tennis court, squash court,
swimming pool, exercise room, and restaurant/bar.)

E) The U.S. Commissary facility is available to U.S. citizen
official visitors who are USG employees. However, payment is

permitted only by USD personal check or traveler checks.

F) Health: All travelers must have health insurance to cover medical evacuations by air ambulance, and should carry with them the 24/7 contact information for their insurer. Medical care in Bangladesh is very basic.

Intestinal problems are common in Dhaka. Visitors must exercise care in what they eat and drink. Presume that all tap water is contaminated, even in hotels. Travelers are advised to drink bottled/boiled water and eat only fruits and vegetables that have been cooked and peeled. Undercooked meat should be avoided. Travelers should also avoid eating uncooked dairy products and food sold on the streets. Visitors who take medication on a regular basis should bring enough for the duration of their visit.

The U.S. Mission has a Medical Unit staffed by a U.S. physician and registered nurses. Visitors should bring a supply of mosquito repellent to Dhaka. There have been cases of mosquito-borne illnesses, including dengue fever, which is transmitted by a day-biting mosquito. Supplies are usually available in the commissary; however, you should bring your own supply in case you arrive in Dhaka when the commissary is closed (on Sunday). We also recommend that travelers have updated immunizations, especially for typhoid.

G) Security: Bangladesh continues to experience some anti-American sentiment as the result of U.S. military and other actions in the war against terrorism and events in the Middle East. Demonstrations have the potential to take place any time and to be unruly. In addition, longstanding rivalry between the two leading political parties prompt periodic general strikes (hartals), public demonstrations, and marches. Normal vehicular traffic is discouraged during the hartals. Visitors should strictly avoid all political protests, demonstrations and marches.

With the prior approval of the RSO, visitors may carry an unclassified laptop into the Controlled Access Area provided

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the laptop is transported under the immediate personal control of the visitor or via diplomatic pouch.

The Embassy advises Americans to be aware of their surroundings at all times, to avoid predictable behavior, and not to accept packages from unknown individuals. Sensitive or personal matters should not be discussed over local telephone lines.

The State Department classifies the crime threat in Dhaka as high. While foreigners are not generally the targets of violent crimes, pick-pocketing, purse-snatching, and other forms of street crime occur frequently, especially in areas frequented by foreigners. Visitors should avoid walking alone after dark, carrying large sums of money, or wearing expensive jewelry. Valuables should be stored in the hotel safety deposit box and should not be left unattended in hotel rooms. Visitors should use the Embassy Motor pool as the Chief of Mission has declared public transportation to be unsafe. In addition, you should keep the Embassy,s 24-hour emergency telephone number available at all times (885-5500); receptionists are on duty 24 hours a day.

¶5. We look forward to your visit.
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